



# Conducting MOUT Training in South Korea

*By Captain Marcus Vartan and Captain Jeff Knudson*

The 94th Military Police Battalion in Yongsan, South Korea, continues to prepare soldiers and leaders to fight by conducting realistic and challenging training. In response to recent operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, the battalion has added military operations on urbanized terrain (MOUT) training to its repertoire.

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*The intelligence finally confirmed everybody's suspicions. Human sources verified that a three-man enemy special forces team was broadcasting anti-American propaganda from the third floor of a building in the town. Soon, a military police platoon received orders to secure the building and capture or kill the enemy team. As another platoon established a cordon around the target building, sealing it off from enemy reinforcements, three more military police squads entered the building. Methodically, they flowed from one room to the next, deliberately clearing every*

*room, hallway, and stairwell. One squad remained on each floor to maintain security.*

*Finally, the third squad arrived on the third floor. Two teams from the squad cleared the hallway and the first few rooms. The third team stacked on the wall outside the door to the target room. A quick signal confirmed that all were in place, and then the team moved smoothly into the room. There were a few well-placed gunshots, then the military police team emerged with one enemy soldier in flexicuffs, leaving two on the floor.*

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This could have been a mission conducted by military police in Afghanistan or Iraq. However, it was a training scenario conducted by the 55th Military Police Company, 94th Military Police Battalion, at the Yongtari MOUT training facility in South Korea. From 30 March to 9 April 2004, the 94th Military Police Battalion conducted intensive MOUT training

geared toward the Global War on Terrorism to prepare for possible operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, or Korea.

### Concept of Training

MOUT training for the 94th Military Police Battalion followed a standard training progression strategy, beginning with individual weapons qualification, progressing to close-quarters marksmanship (CQM) with two M4/M16 stress fires, followed with training on MOUT fundamentals, and culminating with a close-quarters battle (CQB) live-fire exercise (LFX) and a MOUT force-on-force exercise. This directly followed the battalion commander's guidance that training should follow a logical flow, emphasizing to soldiers and leaders alike a training progression that builds to a final culminating event.

The training centered on a MOUT package of three phases of instruction: CQM, MOUT flow drills, and CQB LFX. Each phase was further divided into training modules, with an inherent progression in the training package. Within each phase, each module builds upon the last. Together, the CQM and MOUT flow drills combine as the training foundation for the CQB LFX.

To complement this, the 55th Military Police Company executed force-on-force MOUT scenarios with one platoon conducting an assault, one platoon providing support, and another platoon defending. This allowed the soldiers to integrate all MOUT training into scenario-driven, platoon-level operations.

The company based its training package on one used at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. It also drew information from other sources, including the *Ranger Handbook* (Chapter 14); Ranger Training Circular 350-1-2, *Advanced MOUT Training*; Field Manual 3-06-11, *Combined Arms Operations in Urban Terrain*; and Army Training and Evaluation Program 7-10-MTP, *Mission Training Plan for the Infantry Rifle Company*. The most useful reference was the MOUT training manual developed at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, which the company used to tailor its training to provide maximum effect. The stress fires were developed at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

The company conducted the MOUT training in two blocks over a period of eight days. The first block—four days of CQM and MOUT flow drills—was conducted at the small arms range and MOUT training facility at Yongtari. The second block—four days of CQB LFX and MOUT force-on-force training scenarios—was conducted at the Yongtari MOUT training facility and live-fire shoot house at Camp Casey.

The platoons rotated through the different training events within each block. During the second block,

the platoons executed the CQB LFX and conducted the deliberate attack of a built-up area and the defense of a built-up area.

### Planning and Preparation

The 55th Military Police Company planned and resourced the training package entirely at the company level. Planning and preparation began months in advance using the 10-Step Training Model (see Figure 1). Because land for US training (specifically for MOUT facilities) is scarce, the 94th Military Police Battalion arranged to use the Republic of Korea army small arms range and MOUT training facility at Yongtari, which the 55th Homeland Reserve Division owns. The small arms range was approximately 100 meters wide and 400 meters deep. Essentially, it is a 250-meter Remote Engagement Target System range, which allowed the company to set up targets wherever it wished and soldiers to move unimpeded during the different firing tables.

The MOUT training facility consisted of several concrete buildings, most of which were multiple stories. Laid out like a small city block, this facility provided the ideal location to train MOUT and room-clearing techniques.

The live-fire shoot house at Camp Casey, where the CQB LFX was conducted, is a multiroom structure that allowed the company to develop an LFX scenario appropriate for its training objectives and the experience of its soldiers. It has a catwalk above the rooms that permitted leaders and soldiers to watch each group conduct its training, which aided in learning and evaluation. There is also a small mockup of the shoot house where soldiers could practice their techniques. The company drew a large quantity of ammunition, including 5.56-millimeter ball and 12-gauge buckshot for the ranges and 5.56-millimeter blank rounds for the MOUT flow drills. Altogether, each soldier fired 230 live rounds in the CQM and 68 live rounds in the stress shoots.

1. Assess mission-essential task list
2. Plan training
3. Train and certify leaders
4. Recon the site
5. Issue the plan
6. Rehearse
7. Execute
8. Conduct an after-action review
9. Retrain
10. Recover

Figure 1. Ten-Step Training Model



**Soldiers fire 12-gauge shotguns during shotgun familiarization. They had to engage five targets to their front and five targets to their right.**

Targets were built specifically for this range and emplaced by the Korean Service Corps, the South Korean organization responsible for material support to the Eighth US Army. Headquarters personnel produced all the paper targets used during the CQM and CQB LFX. The company photographed soldiers in opposing forces (OPFOR) uniforms and had these “Bad Guy” targets printed in large size at the post Training Support Activity. The company produced and used approximately 1,000 E-type silhouette targets during this training.

### **Execution**

Good training requires competent and confident leaders. To ensure this, junior leaders received certification on the tasks before their soldiers trained on them. The 94th Military Police Battalion developed checklists for each portion of the training. Using them as guides, the company conducted extensive junior and senior leader certification training that prepared these leaders for the training cycle.

During the second week of the training cycle, each soldier qualified on his assigned weapon, including the M9 pistol, M4 or M16 rifle, and M249 squad automatic weapon (SAW). M249 gunners also qualified with the M4 or M16, since they used these weapons for the CQM and CQB LFX. With the

training foundation in place, the company could now progress to the actual MOUT training.

### ***Close-Quarters Marksmanship***

The CQM, run by company headquarters, consisted of the following modules:

- Basic instruction.
- Reflexive fire drills.
- Discriminatory fire drills.
- Evaluation.
- Shotgun familiarization.

After the CQM, each soldier also fired two stress shoots with his M4 or M16. Each module built on the previous one, ensuring that soldiers learned and applied the proper techniques before advancing. The company first conducted each module with blanks to ensure that soldiers understood the techniques before using live ammunition.

*Basic Instruction.* During this first module, soldiers learned the fundamentals needed to move, carry a weapon, and acquire and engage targets in a MOUT environment. Techniques covered included stance; low and high carry; slow-, rapid-, and quick-fire aiming; firing techniques; and weapon-clearing procedures. With the soldiers now trained on CQM-specific weapons handling and firing procedures, they could transition to the range.

*Reflexive Fire Drills.* During this module, soldiers had to rapidly acquire and engage targets from stationary and moving positions. This module consisted of four familiarization firing tables—stationary, moving and turning, timed, and transition. During stationary familiarization, soldiers had to rapidly acquire and engage targets directly ahead of them at ranges of 4 to 25 meters. The purpose of this table was to familiarize them with the techniques of quickly gaining a sight picture.

During moving and turning familiarization, soldiers had to rapidly engage targets in multiple directions, either while moving or immediately after moving. For the first two targets, they had to pivot to their left or right and engage targets to their sides. For the next two targets, they had to engage targets to their front while walking forward. For the last two targets, they had to walk or run, then stop and engage targets to their front.

With soldiers now familiar with rapid-aiming and -firing techniques, they could progress to the timed familiarization table. During this table, they had three seconds to engage targets located to their front or sides at distances of 4 to 25 meters.

The final table, transition familiarization, required soldiers to engage two targets, located directly ahead at distances of 4 to 25 meters, within 7 seconds.

*Discriminatory Fire Drills.* This module consisted of three familiarization tables—stationary against a single target, moving and turning against a single target, and moving and turning against multiple targets—with a progression similar to the reflexive fire module. These three tables all incorporated shape discrimination firing. Individual targets were marked with a circle, square, and triangle. Soldiers had to acquire and engage the proper shape based on instructions from range personnel. For instance, if the range tower instructed “up, circle,” soldiers engaged the circle and neither of the other shapes.

The first table required soldiers to engage a single target directly ahead of them at distances of 4 to 25 meters. The second table required them to engage a single target after pivoting or walking and stopping. The third table required them to engage multiple targets in multiple directions while stationary or moving. The third table was the only timed table.

*Evaluation.* During this module, soldiers demonstrated proficiency in the skills they learned during the previous two modules. Soldiers were timed and had to engage eight total targets in multiple directions at distances of 4 to 25 meters. They could score a maximum of 32 points on this range by firing the table twice and engaging each target with two rounds. A

minimum score of 22 points was required to progress to the next training level.

*Shotgun Familiarization.* During this module, soldiers had to engage five targets to their front with no time limit and five targets to their right within 12 seconds.

### ***MOUT Flow Drills***

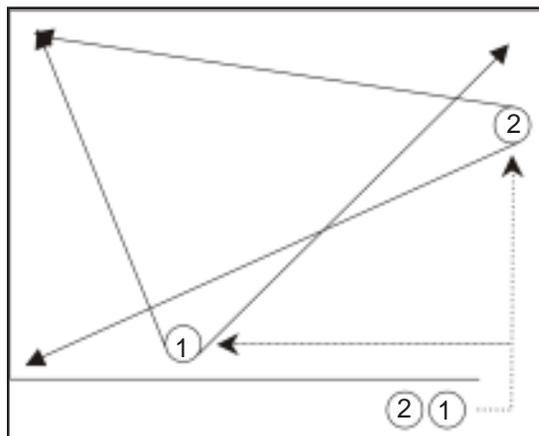
The MOUT flow drills focused on conducting operations at the team, squad, and platoon levels in urban areas. These drills consisted of the following modules:

- Classroom instruction and walk-through familiarization.
- Individual and buddy team flow drills.
- Fire team and squad flow drills.
- Leader planning considerations.

During this training, soldiers used multiple Integrated Laser Engagement System (MILES) equipment and blanks to provide automatic and accurate feedback for their performance.

*Classroom Instruction and Walk-Through Familiarization.* During this module, soldiers received classroom instruction and walk-through familiarization on techniques and procedures for operating in urban environments. Instruction focused on moving inside and outside of buildings; clearing and securing hallways, stairways, and rooms; and performing command and control.

*Individual and Buddy Team Flow Drills.* The company moved to the Yongtari facility to conduct practical application training. Here it conducted module two, executing individual and buddy team flow drills. Either alone or with a partner, soldiers entered and cleared multiple rooms, each set up with a different layout (see Figure 2).



**Figure 2. Example of the buddy team flow drill, corner-fed room**

*Fire Team and Squad Flow Drills.* During this module, soldiers cleared rooms, hallways, and stairways at the team and squad levels (see Figure 3). Soldiers also learned to clear a room with a team, and then pass another team through to the next room. This leapfrog technique was also applied at the platoon level to show how squads could clear and secure individual floors, allowing the platoon to secure a larger building.

*Leader Planning Considerations.* During this module, soldiers learned planning considerations for the MOUT environment. This training included such topics as terrain analysis, reconnaissance, control measures, and weapons limitations as they pertain to MOUT.

### **CQB LFX**

With the soldiers having completed CQM and MOUT room clearing, the company could combine the two in the culminating event, the CQB LFX. The battalion operations section ran the exercise, providing the range officer in charge, the safety officer, and all safeties. The exercise was divided into four modules with a specific training progression. It consisted of the following modules:

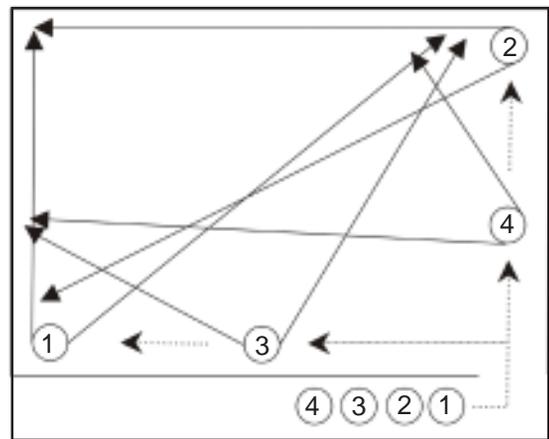
- Individuals clearing a single room.
- Buddy teams clearing a single room.
- Fire teams clearing a single room.
- Fire teams clearing multiple rooms.

The exercise also required training before using live ammunition. The company first conducted each module without ammunition. These dry-firing runs allowed the observer/controller to ensure that soldiers were competent in room-clearing techniques. Next, the company conducted the modules using blanks to ensure that soldiers understood weapons manipulation before using live rounds. Finally, the company conducted the modules using live ammunition.

The battalion special reaction team demonstrated the modules for platoons before the CQB LFX. This allowed the soldiers to view and become familiar with the proper flow and performance of room clearing in the shoot house.

In the first module, one soldier entered the room and engaged two targets, one at his left front and one at his right front (see Figure 4a). In the second module, soldiers cleared a single room as a buddy team (see Figure 4b). Finally, in the third module, soldiers cleared a room as a fire team (see Figure 4c).

Once all the soldiers had cleared a single room, the company proceeded



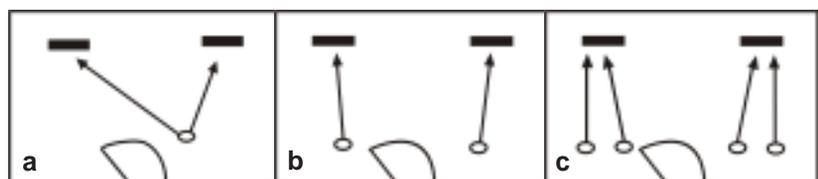
**Figure 3. Example of the fire team flow drill, corner-fed room**

to the fourth module, during which soldiers would clear multiple rooms. They cleared the first room as a fire team. Next, they cleared the second room as a buddy team and then passed a second buddy team through to clear the third room (see Figure 5, page 14).

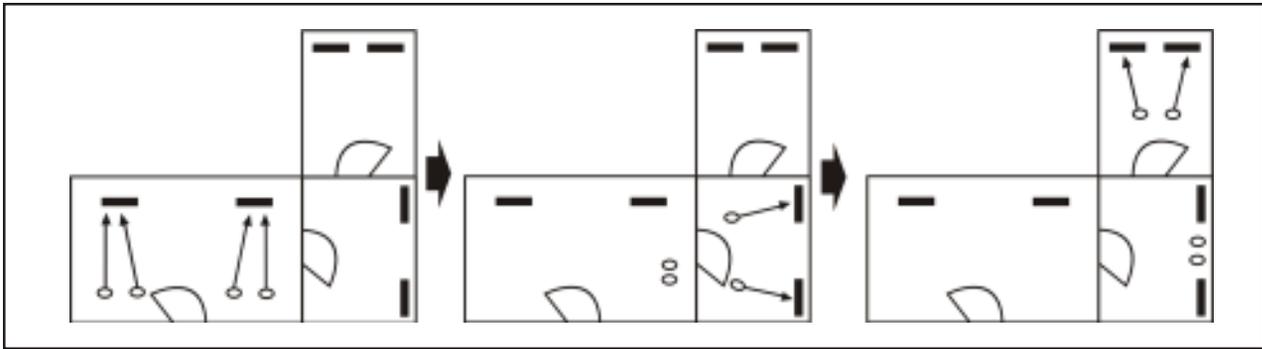
### **MOUT Force-On-Force Training Scenario**

When the platoons were not conducting the CQB LFX, they conducted force-on-force training at the Yongtari MOUT training facility. The company had presented a scenario (at the beginning of this article) and an operation order (OPORD) to one platoon the previous evening, providing the platoon leader with an assault mission and objective. Meanwhile, another platoon, serving as the OPFOR, received a mission to defend the MOUT city. This tested the junior leaders (platoon and squad leaders) in properly executing troop-leading procedures, developing an OPORD, and briefing an order with a sand table.

The assault and support platoons conducted two missions per day—a deliberate attack in the morning and a cordon-and-search mission in the afternoon. During the attack mission, the support platoon established support-by-fire positions while the assault platoon conducted a deliberate attack. During the cordon-and-search mission, the support platoon established cordon positions, allowing the assault platoon to conduct deliberate searches of different buildings. The platoons used this training to execute their previous flow drill training but on a larger scale.



**Figure 4. Clearing a room using one soldier (a), a buddy team (b), and a fire team (c)**



**Figure 5. Fire team clearing multiple rooms**

Now, instead of just clearing a few rooms in one building, they had to clear multiple rooms, floors, and buildings. Squad and platoon leaders had to exercise greater command and control because of the greater number of moving pieces on the battlefield.

**Lessons Learned**

This training was the first of its kind conducted by a unit within the 94th Military Police Battalion, and it provided a significant number of lessons learned.

*Event-Specific Lessons*

This training validated the MOUT package the battalion had developed. It easily accomplished all training objectives within its scheduled timeline using only company resources. Further, all of this training could be executed at the company level. (The company could have conducted the CQB LFX, but it wanted to free up personnel to conduct the force-on-force MOUT training scenarios.) The dry-and blank-firing runs were valuable since they increased the soldiers’ training and reinforced their muscle memory. These runs enhanced the training effect and overall safety.

*MOUT-Specific Lessons*

The harsh realities and distinction from other training environments became readily apparent during this training event. The most important lesson learned is that MOUT is a violent, intense, and decentralized fight, requiring competent junior leaders and soldiers capable of performing sustained combat in a difficult environment. Urban terrain is a threat-filled environment. Enemy forces can be on the upper stories of buildings, down blind alleys, or underground in sewers. The need for effective security, focused in all directions, is ever present. Soldiers must learn to use cover and concealment to protect themselves from attack from different directions. Smoke was necessary to conceal the movement of soldiers, especially between buildings. The M249 SAW was critical as a support-by-fire weapon to cover the soldiers moving to and assaulting buildings.

Communication was key during all MOUT training. With many small units moving in different buildings and other locations, effective means of communication were required for command and control. While the Single-Channel, Ground-to-Air



**A team of three soldiers “stacks” on the door of a building at the Yongtari MOUT facility.**



**A four-soldier military police element clears a stairway. The team’s sectors of fire cover front and back, as well as above and below.**

Radio System (SINCGARS) served as the primary means of communication, other forms—especially hand-and-arm signals and pyrotechnics—were highly useful as well.

Given the nature of the MOUT environment, leaders must prepare for high casualties (up to 50 percent of the assault force). As a result, leaders must plan not only for how they will evacuate casualties, but also how they will reinforce areas where they are losing forces.

### **The Next Level**

This training package served as an excellent introduction to MOUT for the entire company. Every soldier and leader learned skills and techniques required to successfully operate in urban environments. However, to better prepare these soldiers for future MOUT operations, the battalion must continue training on these tasks, building on the foundation it has recently laid. The battalion must take advantage of all opportunities to train on MOUT, especially at the squad and platoon levels. The best time to do this is during the amber cycle, when each platoon has one week dedicated to platoon training.

Weapon ranges should include additional reflexive and discriminatory fire drills. These skills are highly perishable, and soldiers must continue to practice them so that they do not lose muscle memory. In keeping with the Army Chief of Staff's guidance, soldiers must get "trigger time" that goes beyond standard weapons qualifications.

During future MOUT training, the battalion must make the training more difficult, changing the

conditions of the scenarios soldiers conduct. Different conditions for MOUT flow drills include integrating furniture or other obstacles in the rooms or conducting the training at night. During the CQB LFX, scenarios could include shoot/no-shoot targets or require the clearing of hallways or several rooms. Incorporating these conditions would create a more difficult training event that would take soldiers to the next level.

### **Conclusion**

The 94th Military Police Battalion conducted relevant, unique, and exciting MOUT training that challenged its soldiers. The training package it developed and executed, incorporating different individual and collective skills that built upon each other, successfully introduced soldiers to the dangerous MOUT environment. By conducting CQM and MOUT flow drills, culminating in a CQB LFX, the battalion prepared its soldiers for the current battlefields in Iraq and Afghanistan and the potential battlefield in Korea.

The brigade commander summed up the objective of this difficult but necessary training: "When you are clearing a house, if you don't know how to react instinctively with the correct muscle movements, you are going to end up with fratricide. In a close environment, you only get one opportunity. You better be accurate, otherwise you are going to become a casualty."

The battalion has taken that first necessary step to ensure that its soldiers know how to react to that "one opportunity."